

# Adventure Probe

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## DISTRIBUTION

Adventure Probe is distributed during the first week of the month. COPY DATE for contributions, advertisements etc is 14th of the previous month.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

All contributors sending in material between 14th of the previous month and up to copy date will have their names entered in the Hall of Fame for the subsequent month. CONTRIBUTIONS are always needed and ALL readers are invited to send in items for every section. Anything from a single hint or tip to a full blown article are all very welcome. Reviews of the adventures you have played are especially welcome. Please check first to see if a review has already appeared. Don't worry if you cannot send in typed material as handwritten is just as welcome. If you send in contributions for more than one section please use different sheets and make sure you include your name and computer. If you do send in items ready typed then please use A4 with a nice margin all round with text being approx 70 chars across and 60 lines per page. Items can be sent in on disc (all discs will be returned). The Editor is able to print out from Amstrad CPC6128 (Tasword or Protext), C64/128 on (Easyscript or Mini Office II) or Atari ST (First Word Plus). Sorry no printer for the Spectrum. If you send in items for the IN-TOUCH section please clearly mark which are adventures, utilities, arcade etc.

## POSTAL ADDRESS

Please send all correspondence, subscriptions etc to the Editor: MANDY RODRIGUES, ADVENTURE PROBE, 67 LLOYD STREET, LLANDUDNO, GWYNEDD, LL30 2YP. If writing from overseas please add UNITED KINGDOM.



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# HALL OF FAME



My grateful thanks to all the following readers who took the time and trouble to send in contributions during the past month:

CHRIS HESTER, H. DIXON, JAY HOMOSUTOMO, IAN BROWN, JOYCE FURLONG, WIGEL WOCK, JUNE ROWE, MARK ELTRINGHAM, ROBIN MATTHEWS, PAUL RIGBY, JIM STRUTHERS, NEIL SHIPMAN, DAVID CHARNLEY, BOB BATES.

Special thanks to CHRIS HESTER for this months cover picture and to MerC for the cover heading.

# EDITORIAL



Welcome to Volume 5, issue 2 of Adventure Probe.

This month I have had some good news and some bad news. The good news is that the Atari ST came back from repair. The bad news is that when I powered it up for the second time the fault returned again! Ah well, I did have a few hours of joy! I have been playing around with an Amiga this month too. I was fortunate enough to be able to get one on loan to enable me to do some work I had outstanding for a software company. What a fine beast it is too! Once you get into the swing of things it seems to have almost unlimited capabilities. I reckon I will be really sad to see it go back. One thing I have noticed in comparison to the Atari ST is the sound - the quality really has to be heard to be believed. If adventures played tunes all the way through I think I would become dissatisfied with the ST after this. Good thing I usually like to play in silence. I had fun redesigning the pointer on the Workbench. Made a very pretty sword, only problem was that I forgot to change the pointer spot to the tip of the sword and found it impossible to access the top menu bar with the pointer on the sword hilt at the bottom. It has been a great pleasure to work on the Amiga. At least this time I wasn't given a dog when I asked for one! (For new readers: When I asked my husband to get me an Amiga for Christmas (the one before last), he thought I asked for an Amigo and bought me a little dog instead! - no kidding!). There is, I understand, an option for me to buy the Amiga for myself so I am working on hubby almost full time, plumping cushions for him, making numerous cups of liquid refreshment (without being asked) and getting his slippers warmed for when he comes home etc. He just can't figure it out, poor thing, but he'll know what it is all for soon enough! (The softening up process takes a while).

I am very happy to announce that the second Probe Convention will be taking place on Saturday 26th October, 1991 at the Royal Angus Thistle Hotel, St Chads, Queensway, Birmingham, B4 6HY (Tel:021 236 4211). The hotel can cater for 200 people, has ample car parking, is just 10 minutes walk from New Street Station and caters for wheelchairs etc. The hotel have promised anyone staying overnight a special weekend rate of £28 for bed and breakfast and, even better, we can hold the Convention from 9am until 8pm. Tickets will be the same price as last year at £5 per head. Further details and ticket application forms etc will be sent out with the next issue of Probe. Special thanks to Vicky Jackson for making all the arrangements. She is an absolute gem, just give her a job and it is done almost before you replace the receiver.

Well, here I am at the end of the page again. Still loads to say and not enough room to say it in! It will have to wait until next month, by which time I hope that the terrible Gulf War will be over and all our troops home safely once more. I am sure that many of you have relatives who are serving with the forces and my thoughts are with you all. My sincere best wishes also go to the Probe readers who are over there now both in the forces and those living in the Gulf States. Keep safe and God bless you all.

Mandy

# REVIEWS



## TALISMAN

BY SIMON LANAN, 33 DACRE CRESCENT, KIMPTON, HITCHIN, HERTS, SG4 8QJ.  
FOR AMSTRAD CPC - £4.50. REVIEWER - MARK ELTRINGHAM.

You play a farm worker in possession of a silver talisman which has been in your family for a hundred years or more. One day the talisman begins to glow and a voice echoes inside your head telling you to seek and find the remaining three talismans, dropped by the unfortunate bird that stole them, as it fell, dying, onto the evil land of Zarmen. The quest begins after you are magically transported to that land.

This adventure holds about 90 locations and has many puzzles to solve before your quest realises, with entrance to the Tower of Wisdom providing the final solution. The writer uses the P.A.W.'s facility to its maximum strength, the story moving in real time (so beware the evil Zarachan who teleports himself to various locations at night only), supports the RAMSAVE/LOAD command, and allows interaction with other characters. It certainly pays to ask the Hermit, Gruff and Eloana for help. Eloana will even kill the thieving orcs if you can find and return to him his stolen weapon - and just one more tip without, hopefully, giving too much away, saying Glow to something or someone will enable you to see in the dark. This saves you from being strangled by the evil Goblin!

My one niggle in this game came right at the start when, after setting up the boat ready to cross the lake from the island, I spent ages trying to get in the damn thing only to find it wasn't necessary! Goint through the game I found just one spelling mistake and no obvious bugs. The parser is slightly strange at first but following the guide stops you having to second guess all the time. Mapping is straightforward and easy and the accompanying literature is first class with a nine page information guide included. As an added bonus the disk also carries one of his earlier GAC'd adventures as a freebie on the other side. This is entitled Crash Landing and is a worthy Sci-Fic adventure in its own right. For the price, this represents an excellent package for value, nicely written and well presented. A good effort.

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## ESCAPE FROM HODGKINS MANOR

Reviewed by JUNE ROWE on 48K Spectrum.

In this delightful game, with lots of humour thrown in for good measure, you play the part of a paper-boy. You have completed your round, and you are just minding your own business, riding home and thinking of the chips you'll enjoy when you get there, when a crowbar whizzes over a fence, landing between the spokes of your front wheel and catapulting you into the grounds of HODGKINS MANOR.

You aren't far from the front gate, but there is a nasty unfriendly dog there, so you back off

in a hurry. You come across a car in the drive, but even if you were old enough to drive it, the French Chauffeur won't let you get into it. You get the distinct impression that this means there is something useful in the car, but how do you get rid of the chauffeur? Your only way out is through the house, where lives Mr Hodgkins, a scientist. This chap would appear to be an inventor, too, because he has invented a quite unreasonable device for preventing lost paper-boys from entering his front door! It doesn't just stop you from entering - it stops you ... dead!

Once inside the house, you meet Mrs Hodgkins, who obviously thinks that all paper-boys have dirty hands and won't let you go west until you have remedied that fact. Fortunately, there is a RAMSAVE in this game, which you are advised to use frequently - once you get past Mrs H, you find a lethal bookcase. Lethal? Well, it is if you try to move it now - Mr H has arranged that 240 volts of electricity shall shoot through anyone trying to discover what is behind the bookcase!

So there's one of your problems - to solve it, you must first sort out a few more, like where to find the money to buy a disc from the salesman, (oh yes, there's a computer somewhere!), how to find that which the butler has lost, how to get past the locked door in the vestry and how to find something the maid must have before she'll give you any help.

These problems aren't necessarily in the right order ... I'm not giving much away, just enough to make you want to play it. I enjoyed this game very much, and for only £1.99 from Zenobi Software, I can guarantee several hours of pleasure in playing and a few giggles into the bargain.

=====

### OPERATION STEALTH

Delphine Software, Price £24.99. Reviewer - MARTIN LEVERTON, played on Amiga.

I was one of the chief victims of the Probe Convention, or should I say that my family was! I had always fancied the idea of getting a 16 bit machine but until the convention I had managed to resist the temptation. However one look at those lovely beasts and it was "goodbye PCW, hello Amiga!". All I had to do then was find a game to justify the purchase. I tried Dungeon Master - Good but not worth buying a computer for. Then I reached for a computer mag and read a review of Operation Stealth. I'm not up to the 16 bit jargon but I think its what those in the know call an arcade adventure.

Its predecessor, Future Wars, had received mixed reviews but this new game was supposed to have overcome some of the problems that had been earlier reported. So off I went and bought it.

The game is an adventure which is entirely mouse driven, using a selection of menus to determine actions or speech. The story is basically a James Bond-like romp through South America looking for a Stealth Bomber which has been stolen. You play "Glames - John Glames". You have to travel to Santa Paragua, fight off a bevy of spies from other countries, discover

who is the imposter who has replaced the president, fight Otto, destroy "Dr Why", and rescue the beautiful girl.

I felt it all worked out rather well. The graphics were very good and the control of the hero's movements, using the mouse, was precise and easy. Compared to the text adventures I was used to, the game was fairly linear and the puzzles were not brilliant. Some of the puzzles depended on using articles you were carrying on an object in the current scene. Unfortunately, it was sometimes difficult to find such a small object (or even know it was there!) using the mouse. I don't think this is as big a problem as it was in the earlier game because you can scan the picture to examine it, most articles of interest appear in a box beside the screen.

One feature of the game is the action sequence. Fighting someone produces a hilarious punch up which is very funny. There is, however, some arcade sequences during which it was impossible to save. Saving regularly at other times is thus essential.

The arcade sequences were sometimes good fun but one in particular was a real pain as you tried to examine a really wispy bit of seaweed (among other really wispy bits!) before a shark ate you. This aside I thoroughly enjoyed the game though I don't have experience of any similar games to compare it to.

The humour was also quite good though some jokes clearly lost their thrust in the translation from the French!

As my first introduction to this type of graphic adventure I was quite impressed. Certainly worth a try for all you budding super-spies!

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### CAVES OF LORE

From Chris Street, 43 Ridgedale Rd, Bolsover, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S44 6TX. For Amstrad CPC464 on cassette for £3 or Disc £4.50. Reviewer - MARK ELTRINGHAM.

This is Christophers first release, a text only GAC'd game. You play the part of a treasure seeker, find and retrieve the four treasures and deposit them in the cellar of the hut. It is a very well written and described adventure - that is if you find you can't go north the computer gives you a reason why not - something not found in many releases these days. However the game is small, with about 40 locations, and the puzzles are a might too easy to solve. The hardened adventurers amongst you will find most of the puzzles familiar from other games.

Chris is a seasoned programmer with his type ins, debug programs and his work with Angela Allum on the Bard's Tale maps and parties. His programming skills show nicely in a neat little adventure, but, as I have said, the plot is very thin and weak. This is a good effort for an initial release. Chris tells me he is probably going to write the follow up on Adlan which looks well for the future.

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## DIABLO

By Mark Cantrell, available from Zenobi Software for Spectrum 48K at £2.99 and Spectrum 128K at £3.49. NB This game is not compatible with Spectrum 43 in 128K Mode.

Reviewer - SUE ROSEBLADE played on Spectrum 48K

The research vessel Discoverer, bound Earthwards after a six month expedition to the Edanus System, ploughed silently through the black void of space. She appeared normal, her engines quiet, all systems apparently functioning normally, yet there was something not quite right. Apart from the fact that the Discoverer had been lost to Earth some seven months previously, strange mis-shapen figures flitted past the windows, whilst the vessel herself was surrounded by a strange halo of orbiting debris. Suddenly the Discoverer's ghostly solitude was broken by two sleek starfighters on routine patrol. Surprised by the vessel's presence they flew closer to her hull, surveying for damage and attempting to communicate with the crew. Then, without warning, the wingman screamed in cold terror and, closely followed by his bemused flight leader, veered away from the ship and streaked Earthwards in a state of sheer panic, leaving the Discoverer to the quiet solitude she had known for so many months.

Some weeks later, after a ten hour flight through hyperspace, a small shuttle docked with the Discoverer. On board was a reconnaissance team, led by Captain Payne. Preparing to board the silent vessel, Payne opened the hatch allowing the strangely stale air of the ship to mingle with that of the shuttle, air like that of a tomb. Then he noticed that Lawson was missing, somehow he must have slipped past them and entered the Discoverer.

This is an extensive adventure in three parts, with interactive characters and good graphics. It was the winner of the 1989 Golden Shield Award for Best Mail Order Adventure, and is now being marketed exclusively by Zenobi. You may play the part of any one of the four team members, and can switch control at any time. The other three members can be asked to follow you about (SAY TO RUSSEL "FOLLOW ME"). The plot, although not entirely original, is well thought out and the atmosphere is compelling. It's quite useful to be able to play several characters, especially when one of them has his hands full, or when you want to jump quickly from one part of the ship to another. You can just leave someone behind and then change control to move to that character. Each part of the game represents a different level on the ship. At the beginning you must escape from a mysterious explosion aboard your shuttle, and then begin to explore Deck 1 of the Discoverer to find what evidence you can of the events that have taken place there. You very soon begin to realise that a very horrible creature is loose aboard the vessel, and that on no account must the Discoverer be allowed to return to Earth. A quick repair to the lift enables you to proceed to Deck 2 although you'll probably discover later that you've left something behind!

Once on Deck 2 you have very little time to mend the Life Support System that has been vandalised by the monster, and it is on this level that you will first encounter him (it?). An added problem is the fact that the ship is about to go into hyperdrive, and you must disable the countdown mechanism or you will reach Earth almost immediately, with terminal consequences



for the whole of mankind! On this level you will also meet the sole surviving crewmember, Commander Renfield, who is stark raving mad and is running about with the key to the ship's self-destruct mechanism. Deck 2 is definitely the hardest part! Arriving on Deck 3, you must locate the escape pod, find the final missing detonator unit, (you should have found the two others by now!) and deal with the mysterious Lawson. It doesn't take a genius to work out where you have to go from here!

I have got a few criticisms of the game. The original version was littered with pretty awful spelling mistakes, but I am pleased to say that these have been corrected in the Zenobi release. The responses are of a clumsy design in places, for example "The metal lockers is open." "The open fridge is open." and in response to EXAMINE PAYNE, "You see nothing of interest about the Payne." I also felt that Diablo itself is a bit of a disappointment when you finally meet face to face. I suppose it would be quite hard for him to live up to such a terrible reputation, but he was rather too easily kept at bay by the simple use of a stun blaster. Everyone is supplied with a blaster early in the game, and these seem to have an unlimited supply of "blasts", so it makes one wonder how the original crew were so easily overpowered! Finally, there is only one place in the game (48K version, at least) where it is actually necessary to change from one character to another, and to use two characters to co-operate in solving a problem. So, for the whole of the rest of the game it is quite possible to remain as one person. It doesn't seem to affect the outcome if all the others get killed or left behind at the end! This is a shame, because a great deal more could have been made of the possibilities of teamwork under the circumstances.

Apart from these fairly minor points, I have no hesitation in recommending this adventure, especially if you're a space fanatic like me. It's a very playable game, with a strong storyline and powerful atmosphere.

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## MIGHT AND MAGIC II

New World Computing Inc. Price £29.99 but shop around for the best prices. Two discs.

Reviewer - RON RAINBIRD played on Amiga

Here is a game which is vast in every sense of the word, offering many locations in a world made up of every type of region from tropical to tundra. The plot is, as in so many adventures, not earth-shatteringly new but starts in the aftermath of a battle which leaves the world of Cron in a state of lawlessness where swords and sorcery are the order of the day. In the book which comes with the game, the History of Cron, gives a few clues as to what your ultimate aim must be. No prizes for guessing that an Orb comes into it. Your first objective is to create a party of 6 members and a bit of patience is required here until you can grab hold of some high attributes to align to your character, but if you can withhold your eagerness to get on with the game, you will be rewarded later on. Having established your party and journeyed into the first town - there are five in all - you will find that by judicious visits to places such as the local tavern, hints will be obtained to help you in various ways. Here again, it pays to be on the patient side and to restrict encounters to adversaries slightly weaker than your members

so that experience points may be amassed and your characters upgraded to higher levels. You can then go adventuring into the tricky and dangerous places in Cron and there are many of them.

The game comes with a large and well-drawn map of Cron, which shows where the main towns are and a few of the less obvious, but well inhabited, caverns, not to mention Castles, Resorts and Conventions (No, "Probe" is not one of the latter.). All in all, I've found 9 Castles and/or Keeps with lower levels of dungeons, 11 caverns and 8 Resorts etc. All of these have to be well and truly mapped because there are many clues to which much thought has to be given because of the apparent ambiguous tone they possess, whilst riddles abound in both verse and prose.

As you progress through the game, various quests are offered you, the successful completion of which put your experience points up by an incredible rate. As an example Lord Hoardall in Castle Woodhaven asks you to find three ultimate swords. Each of these artifacts is a quest in itself, but successful completion is very rewarding indeed. Other Lords require things as diverse as the heads of three beasts and relics from the past, entailing somehow travelling back a couple of hundred years. Then there are the Jurors of Mount Fairview. This august body will set your party the main quests, 8 in all (I think), but I have not yet completed one of these. Having built my party up to Level 13, I realise that for such quests I need to be much stronger.

Your party of six can be increased by finding Hirelings of various skills, who are dotted about the world of Cron and you may enlarge your group by any two of these mercenaries, provided that you can pay them on a daily basis and do not keep using them as "cannon fodder". Such Hirelings, I would add, are essential to winning encounters in various Arenas, a marvellous way to obtain experience points and gold, just as long as you are the Victors. I understand that there are over 250 items such as weapons, armour and shields and I have also been led to understand that there are more than 200 monsters. This I can believe!

Your happy band of brothers (and/or sisters) may also, for a fee, become highly proficient in specialised skills such as Mountaineer, Pathfinder, Navigator, Pickpocket, Cartographer etc., and this latter skill is a must because then the auto-mapping comes into play and, provided you have been there before, you may tap "M" on the keyboard for a detailed map of your position to be displayed. The Mountaineer and Pathfinder skills enable your party to climb mountains and go through dense forests without difficulty. Without them you will be told the terrain is impassable so that you have to find another route to wherever you wish to go.

There is so much to this game that I have yet to find out; it is worth every panny the shopkeeper may ask for it. There is literally months of play to this game and, though I have devoted many, many evenings to the World of Cron, not once have I become bored because there always seems to be something new just around the corner. For anyone obtaining this superb adventure, I have compiled some hints covering the parts of the game which I have done so maybe, sometime, Mandy will let you into some of these secrets.

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## BEHIND THE SCENES

### AN INTERVIEW WITH MANDY RODRIGUES

BY VICKY JACKSON

After Vicky's last assignment interviewing the Grue!, she was so shaken up that she decided to take a holiday in Wales. Whilst there, we asked her to obtain an interview with the illustrious editor of Adventure Probe, we thought this would help calm her nerves.

VICKY: Firstly let me ask if it is true that when you moved house you didn't tell your children and that they hired the Grue's Hellhound to track you down?

MANDY: No, it was just an oversight on my part really. It was our own dog that tracked me down with his probe-ing nose. I need the children to help with Probe, they are ideal for lots of things like holding their tongues out to lick envelopes and stamps, answering the telephone and then forgetting to pass on the messages and providing suitable background music such as the merry jingle which accompanies INFILTRATOR whilst I am trying to work and demanding to be fed when I find a bit of spare time to play an adventure.

VICKY: It has been reported that you were responsible for instigating a war between two of the major high street banks. Would you care to comment on this?

MANDY: I get the sneaky feeling that my husband was responsible for spreading that juicy piece of gossip! It was terribly embarrassing really, you see I wanted to open an account in the Nat West Bank and took the forms home with me to fill in. I returned to the bank and handed over the forms and the teller looked down her nose at me and asked, "Would Madam like to open an account with the Nat West Bank?". I nodded eagerly. "Then", she continued, "I would suggest that Madam take the forms to that particular bank as this is the Midland Bank!". I could have fallen through the floor. The problem is that we have two identical buildings on the corner of Lloyd Street, the Midland and Nat West Banks and I popped into the wrong one! Actually this is typical for me, I am always getting into scrapes like that.

VICKY: I understand that you once bought a motor bike but when you found that it wouldn't run on 3" discs you took it back?

MANDY: You must be referring to the time I bought my last motor scooter, I rode around on it for a week until it just sputtered to a halt and refused to start. I was furious and wheeled it back to the dealer to complain. He examined it all over, scratched his head, finally lifting up the seal and inspecting the petrol tank before informing me that, if I would like the scooter to go, I should resign myself to having to fill it with petrol occasionally!

VICKY: It is rumoured that you are planning to undergo plastic surgery to alter your appearance so that you won't be recognised at the next Probe Convention and therefore will not have to make a speech.

MANDY: I would love to have plastic surgery but couldn't afford it at present. The only operation I have in mind is the removal of some very unsightly veins in my left leg. However, I have recently lost three stones in weight and have just had my hair cut very short and streaked blond, so perhaps I could get away with it. The only alternative would be to cut two holes in a brown paper bag and to wear that. No, it looks as if you are all going to have to put up with yet another vocal editorial at the next convention - unless we can persuade Tom Frost to do it instead!

VICKY: I understand that you have a fondness for Japanese, is this how you would like to look after surgery?

MANDY: No, it was my husband who had the fondness for Japanese - that is until a recent visit to our local branch of Dixons. He was bending over some of the equipment and saying "Oh this is Japanese too!" he began to giggle and turned to me remarking, "These are all velly reliable!", whilst pulling up his eyes with his hands on either side of his face, only to find himself nose to nose with a stout Japanese gentleman who had walked up behind him. I think that is the one and only time I have seen him blush!

VICKY: We all know that you have many hobbies, but you have recently taken up Scottish dancing and are partnering Tom Frost in the forthcoming Highland Games. How do you rate your chances?

MANDY: As a few readers might know, I am half Scottish on my fathers side. This led me to a great interest in Scottish dancing. The fact that Tom Frost and I are entering the Highland Games was supposed to be a closely guarded secret until, during the Probe Convention, Lorna Paterson spied Tom and I rehearsing in one corner of the room and swiftly took a snapshot to record for posterity. Tom and I had no idea that our secret was out until we each received a copy of the incriminating photograph together with a demand for a substantial amount of money to ensure silence. I believe that Tom has had his revenge by immortalising Lorna, together with many other Probers in his latest adventure! As for our chances of winning - it'll be no contest, we'll win.

VICKY: Not many people know that you once served on the local council and that before every council meeting you insisted that everyone stand and sing "The Yellow Rose of Texas". Why was this?

MANDY: I think that the facts have been a little mixed up here. I did serve on Llandudno Town Council for eight years but I assure you that I did behave myself for most of the time. Apart from one incident. You see, before every council meeting, at 7.30pm we all rise for prayers. That particular evening I had borrowed my husbands watch, as mine was broken. I didn't realise that the musical alarm was set for 7.30am and that I had turned the time on by 12 hours. During the silence of prayers we were suddenly greeted with a very loud rendition of "The Yellow Rose of Texas" as his alarm went off! As everyone began to give startled looks in my direction I firmly stuck my hand deep in my pocket and turned an accusing stare at the councillor standing next to me. I hope they were fooled.

VICKY: Would you like to tell the readers about the time you and your husband ran a boarding house and the only guests that you would take in were those that could prove that they had played all of your games and could speak Portugese.

MANDY: Yes, a few years ago, just before taking over as editor of Probe, we had a holiday flatlet business in Llandudno. Initially, I did make a ruling about the games and the Portugese but I found that it didn't work out too well. It meant that all the guests were either crowding into the lounge around the computer all day long or gathering in the bar chatting away in Portugese to John. At the end of their holidays they didn't want to leave and we had to literally throw them out. After the first year we changed policy and decided that, much as we regretted it, we would have to accommodate "normal" people in future.

VICKY: How many adventure games have been written about (or by) leeks? This question is from one of our readers, the reason for it is not quite clear but he does appear to be desperate.

MANDY: There have been about six in all about leeks. Only one, that I know of, has been written by a leek which was on the old Oric I and called "How Green Was My Garden". Of the other six, my favourites have to be Bungo's Quest for Leeks, Ten Little Leeks, Leek in Paradise and Terrormoleekos.

VICKY: Finally, would you like to tell the readers why it is that once a year you insist on dressing up as Queen Victoria and going around the town muttering "We are amused". You also insist that the whole town dress up, is this some sort of secret ritual?

MANDY: Llandudno is a Victorian resort and it was decided that it would be a boost to the holiday trade on a very slow period during the early spring bank holiday, if the whole town turned Victorian. I became involved about 6 years ago, as Secretary of the Association (and have been threatening to resign ever since) and since then it has come to be quite an event with steam engines, fairground organs and the like, packing the streets. Grue came to see it last year and seemed to enjoy himself. If I have to dress up like an exhibit from a waxworks then it is only fair that everyone else does the same. Grue tried very hard to dress up in Victorian costume but as he refused to remove his Grue-cap, he looked quite strange. A black frock-coat, high white collar and stock don't mix very well with American Baseball caps! Dicon Peeke has been attending the event for quite some time now and, getting a bit fed up with seeing me in the same outfit each year, has promised to dig out a suitable pattern for an authentic Victorian dress for me to make for next May. It would be nice if we could hold the Probe Convention in Llandudno during that time so that readers families could enjoy themselves whilst we had our event. One thing is for sure, if it was held in Llandudno, I would make sure that coffee, snacks and other drinks were all available at Victorian prices! And everyone could drop in and see where Probe is made and meet the rest of the family.

Now, Vicky, as the interview seems to be over, can I offer you something to eat? Some leeks perhaps?

\*\*\*\*\*

## PC EMULATION ON THE ATARI ST

A Personal Experience by Neil Shipman

Do you own an ST? Have you played all the Infocom titles that were released for this computer and are now frustrated because you haven't had a chance to look at their later releases like Zork Zero, Shogun, Journey and Arthur? Well I was - and that's one of the main reasons why I decided to have a PC emulator fitted to my Atari ST (an old 520STFM recently upgraded in memory to 1Mb).

I've had PC Speed for about 6 months now and have been delighted with it in all respects. It's easy to use (just boot up the installation program then insert your MS-DOS disk - which, incidentally, isn't supplied!); it's fully compatible (everything I've tried so far has run with no trouble); and it's quite fast (text adventures respond to inputs as quickly as you'd expect from an ordinary ST title, although graphics take longer and the mouse is a bit jerky!). PC Speed, PC Ditto II (now, apparently, no longer being produced) and Supercharger are all PC XT emulators. Recently, though, a couple of AT emulators, AT-Speed and ATonce, have become available and these have the benefit of running quite a bit faster. However they still only provide a CGA 4-colour graphics display which is the most basic of the lot. This is fine for adventures like Shogun, Journey, etc, where the graphics are shown in detailed monochrome, but I don't imagine it would be much good for adventures which rely heavily on graphics. If you're looking for something better than this then, apparently, the latest UK versions of AT-Speed will also support both EGA and VGA graphics on the Atari monochrome monitor (presumably displaying umpteen shades of grey), and the distributors of Supercharger say that VGA graphics will be available soon (although some writers in the computer press think this unlikely)!!

If you have a Mega ST or an STE then it's supposedly a simple job to fit the emulator because adaptors are available which do away with the need for soldering. But if you've got an old ST like me I wouldn't recommend fitting one yourself. The board has to be soldered on to the top of the main processor and you could very easily fry this while attempting it! Far better to have it done by an authorised dealer. You only need one disk drive for the PC emulator to work and, when I bought PC Speed, I had an external DS drive and an internal SS one. Formatting the DS drive to 80 tracks (720K) worked OK but I found it impossible to format the SS drive to 80 tracks (360K) which meant that it wasn't much use. Installing some of the Infocom titles with just one DS drive is an extremely laborious process, so I very quickly decided to upgrade my internal drive to a DS one and now I've no problems at all. Once installed, all the adventures (including Mines of Titan and Circuit's Edge) will run using one DS drive. Over the past few months I've enjoyed Infocom's Journey, Shogun, Border Zone and Sherlock: Riddle of the Crown Jewels (in which my frantic bumbblings earned me my promotion to Frob of the Year!). I'm saving Arthur and the inimitable Zork Zero for a rainy day/week/month as I know I'm in for a treat with these titles. Fitting a PC emulator is cheaper and much more convenient than going out and buying even the most basic PC. If you're thinking about having one fitted to your ST I would say go ahead - you won't regret it!

## GRAND CHRISTMAS COMPETITION RESULTS

The hidden titles in the story were as follows (in order as they appeared in the text):

ANGELIQUE, DALLAS QUEST, AFRICA GARDENS, ONE DARK NIGHT, WHITE CHRISTMAS, PAY OFF, ICE STATION ZERO, EARTHBOUND, DEADLINE, WIDTH OF THE WORLD, FIRELANCE, PICTURE OF INNOCENCE, DENNIS THROUGH THE DRINKING GLASS, LOST IN THE AMAZON, THE QUEST, ST1, STAR REPORTER, THE LOST CITY, THE TRIAL OF ARNOLD BLACKWOOD, HOLIDAY TO REMEMBER, ALIEN, ESCAPE FROM DEVILS ISLAND, ERIC THE VIKING, BLIZZARD PASS, DARK STORM, ADVENTURE, BUREAUCRACY, BORROWED TIME, EXCHANGE, ESSEX, GOLDEN APPLE, HOSPITAL ADVENTURE, VIRUS, OPERATION BERLIN, OPEN DOOR, SMASHED, RONNIE GOES TO HOLLYWOOD, THE THOMPSON TWINS, UNINVITED, THE MISER, VENOM, RUNAWAY, ESCAPE, THE TRAVELLER, TOP SECRET, HAUNTED HOUSE, HAMPSTEAD, GREEN DOOR, SHADOWGATE, WINTER WONDERLAND, RED MOON, SUSPENDED, FROM OUT OF A DARK NIGHT SKY, NOVA, WOODS OF WINTER, FOREST AT WORLDS END, SNOWBALL, HIT, LURKING HORROR, MOLESWORTH, MORON, MATT LUCAS, THE BEAST, STONEVILLE MANOR, MURDER AT THE MANOR, RED LION, SMUGGLERS INN, SMUGGLERS COVE, BREAKERS, UNDERWORLD - IN THE VILLAGE, TRINITY, WHITE DOOR, NIGHTMARE, THE TEST, TEACHER TROUBLE, NUMBER 6 IN THE VILLAGE, WILL O' THE WISP, MOONHIST, PETE BOG, STRANDED, JOURNEY/JOURNEY ONE SPRING, CUDDLES, MAGNETIC MOON, CASTLE BLACKSTAR, CASTLE EERIE, COLOUR OF MAGIC, THE CASTLE, THE BASE, BLACK FOUNTAIN, THE COUNT, BARDS TALE, BALLYHOO, LEGEND, CURSE OF SHALETH, CRIMSON CROWN, THE CURSE, THE THIEF, MYTH, ONCE UPON A LILY PAD, NEVER ENDING STORY, HARBORO, CRICKET CRAZY, THE CALLING, THE HOBBIT, TIME, LEGACY, ENCHANTED COTTAGE, RETURN TO EDEN, RETURN OF THE JOYSTICK, THE CUP, THE CHALLENGE, ENCHANTER, THE SECRET OF LIFE, WISHBRINGER, DRAGON SLAYER.

There were 115 hidden titles in all. The response to the competition was excellent and, although nobody managed to find all the titles, and a slip of the finger on THE BASE (bast) may have made life more difficult. The winners (those who got most correct) and the number of titles they found are listed below. They should all be receiving their prizes shortly:

113 TITLES - GORDON INGLIS. 110 TITLES - JIM STRUTHERS. 110 TITLES - MARGARET ABBIE. 109 TITLES - IAN BROWN. 109 TITLES - KEITH BURNARD. 108 TITLES - JOAN PANCOTT. 108 TITLES - LORNA PATERSON. 108 TITLES - JOAN WILLIAMS. 107 TITLES - MARK ELTRINGHAM. 107 TITLES - PETER BERGMANN. 107 TITLES - JEAN SMITH. 106 TITLES - GEORGE KERSEY. 105 TITLES - RICHARD BATEY. 103 TITLES - JACK LOCKERBY. 103 TITLES - SUE ILSLEY. 103 TITLES - NEIL SHIPMAN. 102 TITLES - STUART WHYTE. 102 TITLES - DENNIS DOWDALL.

### THE HIT MAKERS

By JIM STRUTHERS

If adventures were pop songs I bet the following would be in the charts!

WINTER WONDERLAND - BING CROSBY

IN SEARCH OF ANGELS - MADONNA

LEATHER GODDESSES OF PHOBOS - BANANARAMA

CAVERN OF RICHES - KEN DODD

HUNT FOR THE SUN GOD - WET WET WET

THE HOLLOW - JIVE BUNNY

JOLLY DUPLICATOR - BROS

PLAY IT AGAIN SAM - FRANK SINATRA

EMERALD ISLE - VAL DOONICAN

STAINLESS STEEL RAT SAVES THE WORLD - BOB GELDORF

## COMPETITION!

Here is your chance to win a unique prize! Thanks to Mike Gerrard who has kindly donated his entire collection of all the Micro Adventurer Magazines, you could be the lucky winner of the complete set! All you have to do is to study the following anagrams and work out what the correct words are. Most are adventure titles but some are makes of computers. Many thanks to DOREEN BARDON for compiling the competition and to MIKE GERRARD without whom there wouldn't be a competition at all!

COME OR MUD	PC MUSTER 48	AI MAG	NO CAR
AT STAIR	LET CRONE	SLEEK RAN IN	LUNGE RINGS
PET ALL FLAM	QUIET STEM	STEW IN	DEAL DOOR
ADD EEL IN	IN ALE	FOUND LADS MAD	ALL SET QUADS
TIMBER SON	GO SAW FORD	SIR FROCK FACE	BEWARE FEN
BLEND A GOUT	OZONE RICE IS TAT		

Send in your entries by 14th March this should give plenty of time for overseas readers to enter the competition too. All correct entries will be put in the hat and one name will be drawn to win the prize. Couldn't be simpler! Results will be published in the April issue.

### LATEST SOLUTIONS RECEIVED

Available from Probe at a cost of 30p each to cover expenses.

BEHOLD ATLANTIS. BRIMSTONE. CADAVER LEVEL 2. CHROMOQUEST. CRISPIN CRUNCHY. DAY TRIP. ECLIPSE. ESCAPE FROM HDGKINS MANOR. FIVE ON A TREASURE ISLAND. INTO THE MYSTIC. THE LEGACY. THE LOST TEMPLE. MAGICIANS BALL. SPONGE. STAR TRIP. WONDERLAND.

### BUGS AND AMUSING RESPONSES THE CRYSTAL FROG

By VINCE BARKER played on Commodore 64

To open the door at the end you need the four digit number and to get this number you have to POLISH THE CRYSTAL BALL with the handkerchief - the handkerchief being in the location where the Vampire is. The only snag is if you visit and kill the Vampire to get the handkerchief you can't open the door at the end. The only way to open the door is to miss out the Vampire location. Solution - Save game, visit Vampire, kill him, get handkerchief, polish ball, get four digit number, RESTORE SAVED GAME, head for the door missing out the Vampire and use the four digit number you found previously!



## ADVENTUREDOM'S ROOTS: A FORGOTTEN AUTHOR

by Alan Davis

It was interesting to read Ron Rainbird's article in the November issue of Probe, taking a sideways look at that genre of fiction which has the most obvious link with adventure games: fantasy fiction. Interested though I was to see which particular novels rated a mention by Ron, I found one very notable author omitted from his list. Since this author wrote what I consider to be a strong contender for the title of "greatest fantasy novel ever written" - in fact he virtually invented the genre - I thought I might try to redress the balance.

I can't remember exactly when I discovered the science fiction novels of C.S. Lewis, but it was sometime during the sixties. I enjoyed these well enough to want to know more about their author, and went on to read Lewis's autobiography "Surprised by Joy". Towards the end of the book I came upon this:

"But then, in Arthur's bookcase, I found THE WELL AT THE WORLD'S END. I looked - I read chapter headings - I dipped - and next day I was off into town to buy a copy of my own.... After that I read all the Morris I could get....."

Now there was something about the title "The Well at the World's End" which caught my imagination then and has haunted me ever since. I registered the name of the author, William Morris, as someone to be investigated in the future, but curiously his books weren't to be found in my local library and I passed on to other things, vaguely puzzled by the apparent obscurity of an author who had clearly been a major influence on C.S. Lewis and also, as I later discovered, on J.R.R. Tolkien.

I was shaken out of my complacency in 1971, when suddenly, quite out of the blue, Pan books decided to rescue Morris from oblivion (only temporarily, as it turned out) and reprint his main fantasy works in paperback. Among them, published in two volumes, was "The Well at the World's End". I purchased, read - and was never quite the same again. Indeed - and this will seem incredible to Tolkien enthusiasts - I put off reading "Lord of the Rings" for many years because I didn't see how it could possibly live up to the standard set by Morris! (Even now, two days out of seven, I still tend to be of a similar view!) Furthermore this book, more than 10 years before I first played a computer game, made me an adventurer - though I didn't recognise it at the time of course. Nevertheless, it has in some measure influenced every game I've written, and in some cases I've cribbed more or less directly from it.

Morris is more fashionable these days of course - but even now he's remembered chiefly for his part in the arts and crafts movement and mainly as a designer of wallpaper! The books are again out of print, I expect, and generally ignored. I daresay your local librarian will be able to dig up a copy from some deep and distant vault, though she'll doubtless think you're being deliberately awkward. Occasionally I come across the odd Morris novel gathering dust in a second hand bookshop but not

often. So what is it that has brought about this neglect? I honestly don't know. There is, it's true, something rather idiosyncratic about Morris's style: a sort of sing-song, medieval style of expression derived from authors like Malory. This may look slightly off-putting at first sight, but in truth it's very easy to get used to after one or two chapters and rapidly becomes part of the hypnotic charm of the books.

Morris wrote a number of fantasy novels, all at the end of the 19th Century, including "The Wood Beyond the World", "The Waters of the Wondrous Isles", and "The Glittering Plain". All of these, in my view, would be the envy of any modern fantasy writer, but "The Well at the World's End" is the masterpiece. Where does its magic lie? Oh, in so many places. Here are a few chapter headings to whet your appetite:

"A Meeting and a Parting in the Wood Perilous"

"Supper and Slumber in the Woodland Hall"

"The beginning of the Road to Utterbol"

Do these trigger the same poignant desire for you as they do for me? The book is full of such stuff. Naturally the plot - the quest of Ralph of Upmeads for the Well at the World's End - is compelling enough; and yet (as with a good adventure game) it's the travelling hopefully rather than the arriving which brings the real satisfaction.

The experience of the quest is the thing, rather than its resolution. Morris's world is full of fresh air, cheerful villages, dewy mornings, leafy glades, grassy banks and rippling streams; of wide vistas, strange and empty plains, sinister mountain ranges and deep blue skies; and everywhere it beckons the reader to explore onward, around the hidden bend in the road, beyond the tree-clad hill, through the mysterious valley. Here's a sample, chosen almost at random:

"So they rode by a good highway, well beaten, past the Tower and over the ridge of the valley, and came full upon the terrible sight of the Great Mountains, and the sea of woodland lay before them, swelling and falling, and swelling again, till it broke grey against the dark blue of the mountain wall."

But why, you might ask, have I spent two whole pages waffling about Morris in a magazine devoted to adventure games? Well, for several reasons. First, I expect that many readers of Probe are devotees of fantasy literature at some level, and this may interest them. Second, because I tend to use Morris as a yardstick when judging adventure games: I'm looking for a comparable sense of wonder from adventures. But third - and here's the sneaky bit - I'd love to play an adventure based on one of Morris's tales. I've toyed with the idea of writing one myself, several times, but really I'm more interested in playing such a game than writing it. I just have this faint hope that some adventure author out there, searching for a plot, might become hooked on Morris and write the game I so much want to play. Well, you never know.....

## DO YOU WANT TO GET YOUR ADVENTURE REVIEWED?

A columnist in a glossy magazine gives some helpful tips on how to get your adventure reviewed. This helpful advice will benefit any author whatever the computer or magazine you are thinking of sending your game too, (including Probe!).

By THE BALROG

Every month the Balrog receives a number of reader's games that are crying out for review in the pages of Amstrad Action. Unfortunately, I am only allocated three pages each month so I can't possibly review them all - so how can you make YOUR game stand out from the crowd? The majority of the games received are written using either the GAC, Quill or PAW utilities and are sometimes very badly presented - improving the presentation improves the chance that your game will be reviewed so try to follow these points:

Review copies should be sent on disc if possible. Don't expect your game to be returned as reviewers like to keep the games for their own collection for mundane things such as screen shots, cover shots, tips and of course their own enjoyment! Discs may be expensive but if you are serious about selling the games then you should take into account the cost of free review copies.

Check compatibility, ie does your game work on both Amstrad 464 and 6128? If possible also check that the colours chosen are readable on a green screen monitor (or black and white television) as there is nothing worse than playing a text adventure and not being able to read the text! Don't forget to enclose an address where the game can be obtained and the price - it has been known for authors to forget to mention these salient points! *(this also happens with games sent to Probe occasionally, even tapes arriving without any mention of the machine they are intended for! - Mandy)*

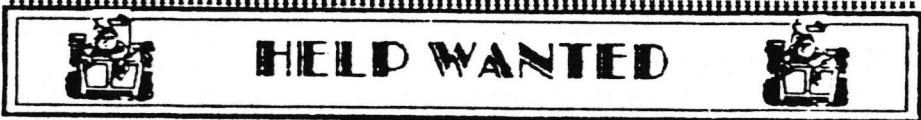
Send the game with all the packaging you intend to use, don't just send a Boots C15 cassette with "Orca Quest" handwritten on it, is this how you are planning to sell your adventure? Therefore enclose the packaging you are giving away with the game (in most cases this will be a disc box, inlay and instructions). Do not enclose packaging that you do not intend to include with the final product (in the past I have received lovely extras, such as the worm from the Lurking Horror packaging or the case from the Hobbit!) The disc supplied should have a label bearing clear loading instructions, the name of the game, a copyright notice and your name and address (so I don't forget it!)

A hint sheet, map or solution always helps, try to impress on the reviewer the good points about your game. Let's face it, most adventure games are meant to take you months to solve and the poor reviewer has to review them in a few days - even they get stuck sometimes and a hint sheet is a real bonus. *(If there is no help provided and a reviewer gets stuck they are quite liable to put the game away and just write a review on the little they have seen which means*

that they probably haven't encountered some of the best bits of your game! - Mandy)

Most important of all - get your game play tested first! Playtesting is used to find any bugs that reside in the program - a playtester should never be the author of the game (authors do not have a very objective view!) but should be a fellow adventurer - preferably experienced adventurers. (Please feel free to contact me to be put in touch with a suitably experienced playtester for any machine - Mandy) Playtesters not only check for bugs, they look out for poor spelling, grammatical mistakes, over-difficult puzzles, illogical solutions, bad parser. They are testing your game to see if it's any good. They'll tell you your mistakes and if you make the changes they suggest your game should improve. (Make sure that your game is returned to the playtester after the changes have been made, for retesting as it is easy to introduce other bugs into a game whilst correcting existing ones too! - Mandy) Many of the games I receive have obviously not been playtested, and suffer because of it.

If you do use playtesters (and you should) then mention their names in the game to give them a bit of credit and publicity but do make sure you ask their permission first. Then, if your playtesters feel your game is good enough, get your game reviewed in a fanzine (eg Adventure Probe). Then, if you get a favourable review in the fanzine, sent it in to a glossy magazine and it will more than likely be reviewed.



"Can anyone help me to finish a reference list I have been preparing. I need the author, year released and publisher (if independent, the address) on the following adventures:

LOST LEGACY OF XIH, SHREWSBURY KEY, A SIMPLE CASE OF ESPIONAGE.

Also the authors names of the following adventures:

ASHKERON, CASTLE BLACKSTAR, CASTLE OF EAGLES, DANZIL, DEAD-ENDERS, ISLAND OF RIDDLES, MANSION (Central Solutions), MAGIC SWORD, MAGICIANS BALL, OLD SCORES.

Please write to the address below and all postage will be refunded."

MARK ELTRINGHAM, 39 Gargle Hill, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich, Norfolk, NR7 0XX

(Mark has sent me his list of all the adventures published for the Amstrad, that he has found so far, this amounts to around 16 A4 pages! This looks as if it will be one of the most comprehensive lists of Amstrad adventures to date. If you can help Mark out it will be a help, not only to him but to all Amstrad adventurers and to Probe!.....Mandy)



# ADVENTURE



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This has got me completely baffled.  
It was paid for anonymously.  
Can anyone help? Mandy.



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## THE LOST DRAGON (PLUS a surprise freebie)

Available 14th Feb 1991 (playtester willing!)

from TARTAN SOFTWARE...£2.95

For some considerable time it had been suggested that a "gathering" of subscribers to ADVENTURE PROBE would be a good idea. Well, through the efforts of a few, who for the moment shall remain nameless, this "gathering" eventually took place as THE ADVENTURE PROBE CONVENTION at the STRATHALLAN HOTEL in Birmingham on 15th September 1990.

A few thought that it would be appropriate to make a special presentation to Mandy. Some money was collected and a certain playtester was charged with the responsibility of buying a "DRAGON" from a well-known shop in BLACKPOOL. But of course, being a playtester, the task had to be performed the hard way and the figurine was eventually obtained in KIRKALDY! In fact two "DRAGONS" were bought, as a presentation to Sandra had now been added to the arrangements.

Some of the conventioners who were travelling from afar were scheduled to arrive on the previous evening and the playtester (alright it was Lorna Paterson) was supposed to meet up with the Witch of Wessex (Joan Pancott) at a certain time on the Friday afternoon. The Witch waited and waited and waited (even forcing a drink on TARTAN TAM in the meantime!), but no sign of Lorna. No wonder! She had arrived early and was "resting" worriedly in her room and by the time that she eventually (sheepishly) appeared in the Lounge the Witch had gone to HER room to change for dinner!

Why sheepishly? You may well ask! After checking in (AND NOT MEETING UP WITH THE WITCH), Lorna proceeded to her room via the lift. Strange lift in this Hotel thought the bold lass. NO THIRD FLOOR BUTTON! No matter, as her room was on the fifth floor, button number 5 was pressed and the lift moved upwards.

On the overhead indicator number 1 lit temporarily, then number 2 then .... Lights flashed on and off and in puff of smoke, a white-bearded WIZARD appeared and purloined Mandy's "DRAGON" from Lorna's handbag. He stood glaring at Lorna and told her that he would have been unable to take the "DRAGON" if the Witch had previously touched it, BUT it could be retrieved in time for the PRESENTATION CEREMONY if any brave soul was prepared to enter his Magical World (open ONLY on Saturdays) on floor 3 of the Hotel. No prizes for guessing who must now accept this challenge in the SPECTRUM adventure THE LOST DRAGON.

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IN THE SHADE ...  
IT OPENED MY  
EYES ...



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MIKE GERRARD'S

# one of our wombats is missing

All through school you had harboured this 'longing' to be a writer and the sound of names like STEINBERG, HEMINGWAY and DRARREG caused your pulse to quicken and your heart to beat faster. However it seemed that all the eloquent comments and flowery phrases that dwelt in the depths of your head could never seem to find their way down your arm and out through the end of your pen. As things stood, it looked as though you were destined to be just one more of the 'faceless-millions', plodding through life in some dead-end job. Or at least that was how it appeared until the nice little man in the 'careers office' put your name down on one of those Y.O.P.S. courses. Little did he or anybody else know just exactly what they were letting you in for ....

"Just pop along to the local zoo and give this note to the head keeper." mumbled the nice little man and so it was that you found yourself employed as a trainee zoo-keeper.

For the first couple of days all was fairly simple and you had nothing more taxing to do than to read through your copy of "Animal Recognition". A small paper-back containing numerous pictures of animals, each with a few well-chosen words to assist you in finding out just which animal was which ... no easy task for somebody who had never escalated beyond the 'three bees in a jam-jar' stage of animal husbandry. However most of the pictures were clearly printed and suitably labelled, apart from something on page 79b and that was probably not very important anyway. The one for the Polar Bear caused you to snigger when you read it because it stated that, despite all rumours to the contrary, the Polar Bear did NOT spend all its time perched on a gigantic see-through mint! However you kept finding yourself drawn back to the emptiness of page 79b and the one word boldly printed across the top of the page .... WOMBAT .... what was one of them and would you ever see one?

So it was that the head keeper approached you and with a gentle grin on his face said .. "Time to earn your keep my young friend, no more studying the pictures for you!" With that he donned his overcoat and headed for the door. "I'm off now, but before you go home just take a trip around the zoo and make sure that nothing has escaped."

### NOTES

When loading this game will all +2 and +3 owners please ensure that they select '48k Basic' and then type LOAD "" and press ENTER.

Use the commands CASSETTE and MEMORY to store a game 'position'. Cassette will store that position to TAPE, whilst memory will store it into RAM. Always use CASSETTE to make a permanent record of your progress.

Some useful abbreviations are ... Z = WAIT, L = LOOK, R = REDSCRIBE, X = EXAMINE, I = INVENTORY.

### HINTS

Be kind, generous and above all patient and remember that the best place for fish is on a plate beside some nice crispy chips. Bored, then type in some names.



"I ain't got it .... honest!"



# RETURN OF THE SON OF COLOSSAL ADVENTURE THE REVENGE

(Or: The Valley of the Trolls)

A short story by Kylie the Wombat Slayer

The mystic forest to the west of the valley was awakening to a beautiful autumn morning. Little squirrels frolicked happily in the trees, and birds chirruped happily amongst the leaves and branches. The sun shone down through the golden leaves, and the dappled light fell into the mouth of a cave, set into a low cliff amongst the trees. It was not a large cave, but it was what estate agents would describe as a delightful compact des res of open aspect set in a sought-after rural area. However its occupant seemed less than delighted with his situation, and the idyllic forest calm was disturbed by a steady stream of muttering and grumbling, and the occasional irritated puff of smoke. Bernard, in his home deep in the heart of the woodlands, was not a happy dragon. His once not insubstantial hoard of gold and jewels had been reduced to 12 copper pieces, three silver coins, a one Zorkmid piece and a tin medallion inscribed - "To the Grue, class 2A, for continuing progress in needlework". His food store had similarly been reduced to a single vigorously sprouting potato and a nearly empty jar of pickled gherkins. Winter was drawing on, and Bernard was woefully unprepared. As he surveyed his draughty cave and empty larder, a terrible realisation penetrated Bernard's never too quick mind. He was going to have to get a job.

Bernard was not particularly large or intelligent as dragons go, but his handsome looks and easy-going nature had made him perfect for working in the world of adventures. His scaly skin was a particularly pleasant shade of light green, his claws were sharp and gleaming and he was capable of producing a quite impressive jet of flame. Because of this he had become quite sort-after, and, despite his lazy streak, had made a more than comfortable living spending his days hoarding gold, imprisoning maidens and frying adventurers with enthusiasm. He had left the world of adventures some time before, after making what he had thought at the time had been his fortune, but increasing mortgage payments on the cave and extravagant spending habits had quickly shrunk his assets, making Bernard wish that he's listened to his grandmother's advice. "Never trust a stranger with his eyes set too close together", she'd quaver, "Always wash your claws after a meal and, most importantly, my lad, always invest any large sum of taxable capital in a high-yield personal equity plan or in a reputable financial institution's limited access deposit account". How right she'd been, that crafty old dragon, Bernard thought. He often wrote to her in her villa in Acapulco.

Heaving a heavy sigh and gathering together his entire fortune in the traditional spotted hanky on the end of a stick, together with a piece of mouldy cheese he'd found right in the back of his larder, Bernard left his cave with a regretful glance before determinedly heading in what he remembered as the direction of the valley. It was not as if he really needed a job, he reasoned to himself, as he absent-mindedly crashed through the trees and bushes, leaving a wide swathe of destruction behind him. It was just that he was making a comeback, having deprived his adoring public for much too long.

In a more cheerful frame of mind he soon found himself at the old picnic ground which he knew was only a few miles from the valley. True it was quite overgrown, with bindweed and thorns twisting around the tree little tables and benches, and the "no litter" sign all but invisible beneath a pile of empty burger boxes and cans, but the valley municipal council was probably a bit behind on the maintenance as usual, thought Bernard unconcernedly. With a spring in his step, he almost skipped through the trees towards his destination at the head of the valley, speculating as he went on how the world of adventures might have changed since his retirement.

The jobcentre was a squat brick building beside a rippling stream, and seemed busier than Bernard had remembered. Feeling rather apprehensive, the dragon squeezed into the smallish room, being careful to step around the well in the middle of the floor. The queue was comprised of an interesting variety of creatures, and seemed to be moving very slowly. As he joined the queue and edged forwards, looming over the bleary eyed troll in front of him, (who looked around with some concern and quickly hid his bottle of highly inflammable grade 2 rocket fuel inside his grubby raincoat), Bernard's previous optimism slowly began to fade. For a start, the vacancy cards that he read on the noticeboard as he shuffled towards the counter didn't offer the promise they had done in the old days. "Birds and small furry animals required to add atmosphere", said one. True, those jobs were a walkover if you could get them. All you had to do was rustle leaves occasionally or run across leafy woodland glades. The worst you'd get asked to do was throw the odd nut at the adventurer, or bite his ankles and run away again. But Bernard had to admit that there wasn't much scope there for a dragon, and the pay was terrible anyway - a couple of handfuls of birdseed or two carrots an hour weren't exactly going to keep him in mounds of gold.

The rest of the cards were just as unsuitable for a dragon of talent and high expectations. Quickly looking through them Bernard noticed that most of them seemed to be for cleaners. There always seemed to be vacancies for cleaners - cleaning in adventures was a dangerous job. Adventurers tended to be messy people, always dropping things, especially in mazes, and there was nothing guaranteed to irritate them more than some earnest little droid rushing around after them picking everything up and giving it back to them. So many promising careers had been ended at the cleaner level by a well aimed axe in the primary input socket. "Ought to be a law against it" he grumbled to the troll, almost setting fire to the bottle of rocket fuel which the latter had been taking a stealthy swig from while he thought Bernard had been looking the other way. There was little else of interest amongst the rest of the cards except, for some reason, a puzzlingly large number of vacancies for gnomes. Bernard shrugged, but quickly forgot about it as his mind wandered to other matters.

As the queue continued to trail towards the desk, and the troll edged as far away from him as possible before resuming his drink, Bernard sighed, and swished his tail back and forth absently, demolishing a small rack filled with leaflets and knocking an unemployed thief, who had been trying to untie Bernard's spotted handkerchief, into the well. He could hardly believe how much things had changed! He could remember the good old days, when the walls of the job centre had been plastered with real jobs. Wizards, maidens, magic swords, skeletons, trolls - and especially dragons. If you were a dragon in those days, you had it made. He wistfully

remembered the jobs he'd turned down, guarding treasure, terrorising maidens, razing whole villages... Roasting adventurers with one breath had been one of his particular specialities - he'd practiced that one almost non-stop in his younger days by working as a grill chef in McGandalf's. He'd started on chickens, had worked his way up to pigs and sheep and had finally gone on to adventurers. They were much more difficult to crisp evenly in one go. Their armour tended to absorb the heat and biting through chain mail all the time had cost a fortune in dentist's bills. Bernard hadn't cared though. He'd done his job so well, he'd really worked himself up to the top of his profession - he'd taken such pride in his work. To think it had come to this!

Bernard's train of thought was interrupted as the clerk yelled "next", and he saw that the troll was at the front of the queue now. The blond woman behind the desk looked up from a mountain of forms with a bored expression. Looking at the nameplate in front of her Bernard saw that her name was Sharon. "Name" she droned. "~~Mmmrrsshmm~~" the troll mumbled, looking embarrassed. "Could you speak up a bit please, sir?" Sharon drawled, studying a speck on the ceiling. "~~Mmmrrsshmm~~" the troll said again, looking about as embarrassed as it is possible for a three ton lump of rock to look. "I'm sorry sir?" said Sharon, who didn't sound in the least bit sorry. "Alright!" grated the troll loudly "My name is Nigel, Ok! Did everybody get that?" Bernard shook his head in sympathy. "What sort of work are you looking for, NIGEL?" Sharon asked, extra loud in case anyone at the back hadn't heard the first time. "Any toll bridge operating jobs going?" the troll asked without much hope. "No call for that sort of thing nowadays." Sharon told him smugly. "Have you ever considered reincarnation as a small furry animal? We have several vacancies for squirrels and a character part for a rabbit in the latest Magnetic Scrolls." She handed him a leaflet about the new Government Reincarnation Scheme and yelled: "Next!"

The troll shuffled away, clattering to himself, as Bernard drew himself up to the grille. "Do you have any vacancies ... " he began, and then stopped as he suddenly recognised the face of the woman behind the counter, "Well run me through with a magic sword if it isn't Princess Morana!" he cried. Sharon looked up in amazement. "Bernie", she exclaimed, "What are you doing here?" Fond memories filled Bernard's mind as he remembered the first ever adventure he had been in, the adventure that had started his brilliant career. It had been a good part. Princess Morana had been tied to a tree outside his cave and he'd had to pretend to be asleep whenever any adventurer came past so that they could stab him with the magic sword. If they didn't put the elven boots on first, he'd wake up and crisp them. He and Morana had had a running bet about how many adventurers he'd get every day and during slack periods they'd get together with some of the local dwarves for a game of poker. They'd had some great times, the only drawback being that every time the dwarves lost they had a habit of disappearing in a greasy puff of smoke without paying up. They didn't write adventures like that any more. "What am I doing here?" Bernard exclaimed, "I might ask you the same question!" Sharon gave him a sorrowful look. "When was the last time you saw a job on offer for a beautiful princess or a simple peasant girl? she asked him. "It's been happening to us all. Just look over there." She pointed to two characters in the ever growing queue behind Bernard. A small moth-eaten bird sat perched on top of an even tattier snake. They appeared to be arguing about whose turn it was to

babysit the eggs. "They used to be the best team in the business." Sharon murmured, "Now look at them. They had a big comeback a couple of years ago, but the end result is the same. People are just getting tired of the same old plots. All the old dungeons have closed down now. Nobody wants to know about vampires and mummies any more. They want something different to the same old adventures although," she continued with a puzzled frown, "gnomes have been very much in demand recently for some reason." "Can't stand gnomes," Bernard said irritably, "Don't you have anything for dragons at all?" Sharon sighed. "The last dragon vacancy was six months ago." she told him, "ever thought of going into arcade games?"

Bernard was horrified. "Arcade games!" he spluttered, "sitting around all day waiting for some brainless, acne-covered 12 year old called Wayne to swan up and zap me with a laser?! No way! Forget it!". "My goodness you're out of date," Sharon exclaimed, "things have changed in the world of arcade games since you retired. There's new technology and everything. Now it involves sitting around all day waiting for some brainless acne-covered 12 year old called Wayne to swan up and terminally de-stabilise your integral molecular structure with a nuclear positron transformer."

"With a what?!" cried Bernard, who had unsurprisingly understood almost nothing of what Sharon had said, and who was getting more upset by the minute. "Well basically," explained Sharon, "it involves being zapped with a laser only much better."

"I'd rather starve" Bernard replied haughtily, "I may be out of date, but I still have my dignity." "I don't suppose you can type or anything?" Sharon asked, without much hope. "Well, there's a new company set up in the valley who need a clerical assistant for a couple of weeks. They've moved into the old dungeon - you know the layout, you should be able to cope with the work - it's mainly filing I'm afraid, but it'll keep you going until you can find something better. It's the best I can do for now."

Taking the card that Sharon offered him, Bernard turned and squeezed back out into the valley. Behind him he heard Sharon yell "Next!". There was a clap of thunder and a brilliant flash of lightning, followed by clouds of billowing smoke. As several of the other members of the queue staggered out of the squat building, blackened, coughing and choking, a harsh voice declared:

"I am the Lord of Eternal Night - Immortal Prince of the forces of evil and darkness - tremble mortal, and despair!" "Any experience?" Bernard heard Sharon say as he walked out of earshot.

TO BE CONTINUED.....

How will Bernard get on at his new job? Will Bernard ever find himself embroiled in an adventure ever again? Tune in again next month to find out the answers to these questions and more!





# LETTERS



## THANK YOU FOR A NEW INTEREST

I must say thank you to the writer of an article about "The Chronicles of Thomas Covenant" which appeared in Adventure Probe some time ago. On their recommendation, I have read the two trilogies and any other by Stephen Donaldson that I could get my hands on. If I hadn't seen the article I would have missed out on not just the enjoyment of a good book(s) but an emotional experience as well. I'm presently reading David Eddings' stories which, while in a different style, are just as gripping. As well, I look forward to trying out some of the authors that Ron Rainbird mentioned in November's Probe. I would like to wish everyone a very Happy New Year.

MAREE WALSHE, Victoria, Australia.

*(It's nice to hear that you have enjoyed those particularly fine books, Maree. I too am a great fan of David Eddings and Stephen Donaldson. You really should try "The Sword of Shannara" by Terry Brooks too and the others in the series. Happy reading.....Mandy)*

=====

## CONFUSION RESOLVED

A few months ago a reader was enquiring about versions of a game called the LOST CITY. As you know, hints and tips were given for this game by Tony Melville and a serialised solution was supplied by June Rowe but neither mentioned the source of the game. Well, the version covered by both contributors is the one that has a loading screen showing a sinking ship and the lost city is ATLANTIS. The first task is to get a toga from a dead body. This game was in fact written by Martin Page on PAWS and was published by Gilsoft in 1989. It was also included on a cover tape by Sinclair User. I read somewhere, possibly in Spellbreaker!, that there is another LOST CITY that was said to be an "Australian import" so perhaps one of your Australian readers can throw some light on the problem.

BOB BATES, Burton Joyce, Nottingham.

*(Thank you for the helpful information, Bob. As you know, Probe has solutions on file for two LOST CITY adventures. Perhaps the Australian one makes three? It will be interesting to find out. I know that there has been some confusion over four adventures entitled THE ISLAND and two adventures entitled WITCH HUNT. At least now the readers will know which LOST CITY they need the solution for (if they tell me about the toga!).....Mandy)*

=====

## HAPPY DAYS

As one of the people who was moaning about the lack of Amstrad adventures being released. I feel I must write to praise all the people who have made the effort to alter this. It would seem that there is a shimmer of welcome light at the end of the tunnel. At the moment a lot of resurrection is going on along with new releases and conversions. Oh bliss! Surely this can only be for the good of the CPC and Probe. If adventures are appearing on a regular basis then this helps to keep a sound base of players. Players mean buyers, buyers mean producers and so forth, a lovely little circle that I'm sure every one wants. Eight bits are far from dead yet! The Spectrum has surprised everyone by surviving for so long. Let's hope Amstrad can now enjoy a good run and get the support it craves. So to all the people I wrote to, begging for conversions etc, I say WELL DONE! If you took notice, also to the people who have of late

produced new adventures for the CPC (too numerous to mention). To those who haven't, please strike while the iron is hot. One more parting thought before I finish. Players please support the CPC by buying games to keep them coming. Long live the Amstrad!

JIM STRUTHERS, Blyth, Northumberland.

=====

AMIGA GAMES ARE GOING PD

I would like to apologise to the readers, especially Paul Vincent, for contradicting myself in my letter, which after re-reading it, I realised I had done, sorry. But I still think that most of the points I made were valid ones. Bob Adams, I didn't mean that you *should* go out and buy a 16 bit, I meant that people *are* buying 16 bits and 8 bits *are* becoming extinct (in comparison to 16 bit users), not *have* become extinct.

However, I have not written to argue about this but to tell you that I will not be selling anymore adventure games. The profit from MIDNIGHT THIEF was extremely low, I didn't mind this because I don't really care much for the money I earn due to programming being my main hobby anyway. What I didn't like was processing all the orders, assembling packaging etc. It interfered with my college work. So from now on all my products will be free (including MIDNIGHT THIEF). They will be available from public domain library, but if you wish to avoid copying charges then send a blank disc and a SAE to me and I will do it for nothing. If you would like a manual and map to MIDNIGHT THIEF then include 20p or a 1st class stamp with your letter.

SURVIVOR should also be available by the time you read this. This is a science fiction strategy/role playing game rather similar to the film Alien. I first created it about a year ago, but my friends liked it so much that I decided to rewrite it. It uses first person perspective viewing, selectable characters and a number of different space stations to play on. Each character has their own strengths and weaknesses and are best suited to different stations.

I would also like to hear from anybody with views on my games or ideas for improvements which could be used in future products. Any ideas I use will of course get a mention in the game and also a copy sent straight to them including the disk! (B\*\*\*\* H\*\*\* Dylan, that means we get one blue, sony, unbranded disk with a disk label with little blue bits on it for absolutely NOTHING!!) Yes, well, that's just the kind of guy I am. Both games are available for the Amiga with 1 megabyte. So send letters or disks to me.

DYLAN THOMAS, 29 Llewellyn St, Glynnaeth, West Glamorgan, SA11 5AF

=====

REFUND OFFERED

As you know from our recent telephone conversation, there are quite a few problems with my book THE BEGINNERS GUIDE TO ADVENTURES. There are more than a few spelling mistakes and typing errors scattered through it, and some of the letters haven't copied too well. It is for this reason that I ask you to hold back any sales in the future until I have had the time to go through it myself, and correct any errors therein. Also I should like to be able, through your pages, to offer a refund to anybody who feels their enjoyment or use of this book impaired due to the mistakes mentioned. I am of course very disappointed at the way things have turned out, but feel that this is at least the right thing to do, in order to forestall any possible future criticism. As to when I shall get around to rewriting it I really cannot say. Since sending you

the text files I have moved on to other things which take up quite a lot of my time. I shall do my best to correct things at my end, but I cannot give a definite promise as to when. I should like to extend my apologies to anyone who has bought a copy and not been pleased with it, but as I say, a refund is available. What more can I do?

DAVE HAVARD, Fareham, Hants.

*(I have had quite a few favourable comments from people who have enjoyed your book, Dave, and despite someone pointing out the spelling mistakes to you, especially as there were only a couple of them, withdrawing such a helpful book seems a bit drastic. However the decision is yours. It does seem a pity, though, as I have just received a most favourable review of the book for publication in Probe.....Mandy)*

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### AN OPEN LETTER TO TEXT ADVENTURE PURISTS

I have over the last few months noticed several letters in Adventure Probe with people saying that they only ever buy text ONLY adventures and nothing else, I would like to know why? I myself have always enjoyed playing and writing graphic adventures and with the development of my PIE system have now opted for simple arcade elements to be added to some of the games I write. As an adventure writer I know not to make the arcade elements difficult and I always make sure that they compliment the adventure.

I think I should make my stand point clear. I have nothing against text only adventures, but if every one was to stick to these, where would there be any progression in the adventure world? I, via COMPASS SOFTWARE, developed PIE (Player Interactive Extern), because I wanted to add a finale to my last game INVADERS FROM PLANET X the likes of which had never been seen before. Not only that, but I also wanted this arcade finale to change depending on your progress in the adventure, so to end up with a total ADVENTURE/ARCADE interaction! My own mail order customers have been very impressed and have complimented me on an exciting new development. I know people might be saying, what about the wasted memory of all these machine code sound and screen FX and the arcade section etc. Well, THERE IS NO WASTED MEMORY! I write all my adventures on the PAW and with the help of my PIE system use the 4K of memory that normally cannot be accessed. This is where I put all my arcade sections, sound FX etc. So, instead of you the player losing out on text, you end up with more of everything and a full 41K adventure which you would not normally be able to get on the PAW. I have hundreds of very loyal and supportive customers and not one has ever said "Don't bother doing graphic adventures with your sound and screen FX as I like text only games." If this was the majority opinion then I would be pleased to do that. Text only adventures would save me a lot of time and effort and programming. However, I believe that good graphics and good sound on screen FX are an important part to an adventure and can add great atmosphere and a great sense of urgency, especially if these can be added without any loss to memory. I do not charge any extra for all the extra time I spend programming all these things, so why shouldn't I put them in and why won't you out there try something other than text only? Compass Software has always appreciated constructive criticism and if you have any then let me know or write to Adventure Probe with any questions and I will be pleased to answer them.

JON LEMMON, Compass Software

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Can I, through Probe, thank Zenobi Software. I sent for the game LAMBERLEY and received it the next day. Unfortunately when I loaded it, it became tangled up in the cassette. It was no-ones fault, just one of those things that happen. So I sent a cheque for another copy. A couple of days later I received a copy plus my cheque back. This tape is fine. If all our Software Houses were as good as Zenobi we would have no reason for complaint. THANK YOU ZENOBI.

I would also like to say THANK YOU to Probe readers who have helped me through 1990. I wrote to Probe a couple of times for help and was absolutely overwhelmed by the response. I wish Mandy and all Probe readers A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR.....PATRICIA NAYLOR

Just a quick note. I put a plea for help into Probe a few months ago - I was stuck in KINGS QUEST IV, and needed a specific piece of advice. I've just received a full solution, maps and all, from Paraskevas Tsourinakis of Greece. I've sent off a "thank you", but a thought occurred to me - perhaps you could run off a half page of thank you's in Probe from time to time. The thank you's might spur some of the more skeptical, of which I was one, to believe that Probe really does operate as a vast informal network.....SANDY

MerC - I haven't forgotten your kind offer, I just haven't managed to get around to buying an Atari ST yet!.....JILL

Note for Alan Phillips - Who needs Andy Stewart when we have Crooning Lorna!.....TOM FROST

 **IN-TOUCH** 

ATARI ST software for sale or exchange: CASTLE MASTER, THEME PARK MYSTERY - £10. SOUND BY SHADOW - £7. NORD AND BERT £5. SLAYGON AND TANGLEWOOD - £3 each. WANTED: TIMEWORKS A.T.HOULSTON, 3 Pritchett Drive, Littleover, Derby, DE3 7AX.

GIRL PEN PAL WANTED: I'm looking for a girl pen-pal who likes adventuring on the Spectrum +2. My interests are adventuring, music (anything from Rod Stewart to Wet Wet Wet), and reading. If interested then please write to: GARY NAYLOR, 3 Glendale Ave, Lostock Hall, Preston, Lancs.

ATARI ST Adventures for sale: LOOM (Brand new and unopened) £10. IBM PC Software for sale: LEISURE SUIT LARRY 3 £8. DRAGON WARS £8. DIE HARD (3D fighting adventure) £4. DEATHTRACK (Racing/shoot 'em up game) £4. FACEOFF (Ice Hockey simulation) £4. Contact NEIL SHIPMAN, 1 Heath Gardens, Coalpit Heath, Bristol, BS17 2TQ.

*(In the In-Touch section of the January issue the wrong telephone number was printed following the ad for Amstrad adventures from H.Higgs of Nottingham. The telephone number given turned out to be that of Stuart Whyte. Mr Higgs is listed as ex-directory, so, if Mr Higgs will supply his correct telephone number I will repeat his ad. My apologies to Stuart for any inconvenience caused by the calls.....Mandy)*



# "DEVILS' BRICKS"

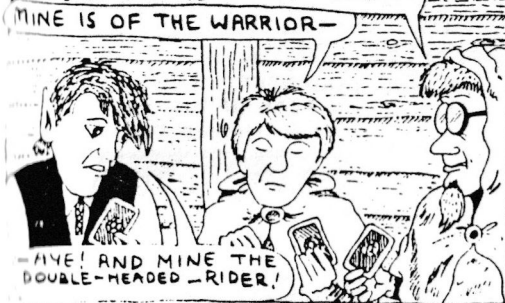
WRITTEN, DRAWN & INKED BY:

KEZ GRAY

25TH FEBRUARY 1990. (T.P. 4 1/2)

**I**N THE TIME OF THE 3RD AGE OF THE SUN, HAVING FOUGHT IN THE BATTLE OF KU-DĀRAK AND LOST, OUR 3 HEROES (LEGORAS THE HALF-ELVEN, HILDORO THE HOBBITISH AND GRIMBAULD THE MAGICIAN) ARE ON THE RUN WITH A PRICE ON THEIR HEADS - COURTESY OF THE KU-DĀRAK KING. THEY SHELTER IN A TAVERN AND GRIMBAULD "READS THE CARDS"....

ONE OF THESE HAS A CARD THAT SHOWS THY FATE...  
MINE IS OF THE SWORD-KING....



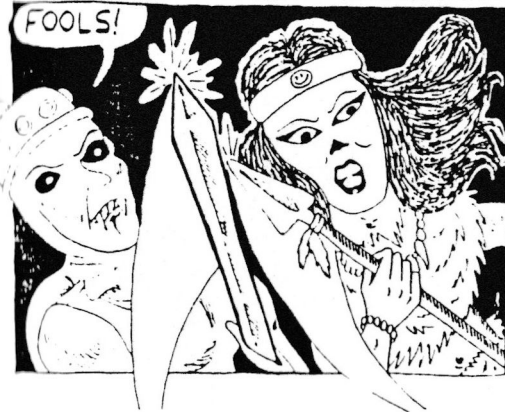
-SUDDENLY-



INDEED! AND THY HEADS SHALT MAKE US A GOODLY SUM, SAY I!



METHINKS NOT, EVIL ONE....





SERVANTS OF DARKLINGS!!!  
- I SWEAR VENGEANCE ...



YEEKS!  
AAARRGH!  
URK!  
THOK!  
ZUNK!

NO! THOU HAST VANQUISHED THY ENEMIES, LEGORAS ...  
AYE, KAL-DIRTH - AND THEY MY COMRADES... I MUST  
FLEE BEFORE MY KILLER ARRIVES!



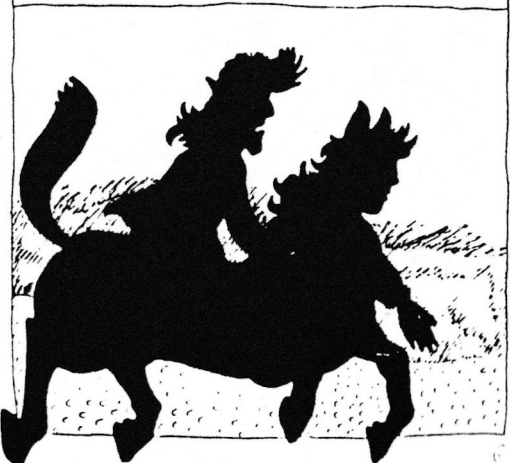
I GO WITH THEE, FRIEND ...

- WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF  
KAL-DIRTH, LEGORAS LEAVES  
IN FEAR OF HIS KILLER - THE  
"DOUBLE-HEADED-RIDER" ...



... UNAWARE THAT THIS  
RIDER IS ...

... NONE OTHER THAN HE !!!



EPILOGUE:

Six days later, fraught with fear and anxiety, Legoras was to take his own life - thus completing the Prophecy of the three cards.



The End!

## GRUESOME

By DAVID CHARNLEY (Aged 12)

There are many nasty places  
that adventurers fear to tread,  
But one of the most feared  
in the Sacred Book is said,  
To be the realm of darkness,  
Where Orcs and Trolls hang out  
And the furry horror  
lives there too,  
His name quite simply is  
THE GRUE!

To recognise a Grue is a very easy task,  
You just need to look at one,  
You don't need to ask.  
The tell-tale signs  
of a black baseball cap and shirt,  
Are enough to make even the bold traveller  
Turn tail and hit the dirt.  
So when you meet a Grue, be nice and be polite,  
As you never know  
What's on his menu for tonight!

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## TITLE TWISTS

By JOYCE FURLONG

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS - HIDES SCORNED BLOOD!  
DARK SKY OVER PARADISE - KAPOK DRIVER'S SAD YEAR!  
CHAOS STRIKES BACK - A TOSS BREAKS CHICK!  
INTO THE MYSTIC - SIT TO CITE HYMN!  
ENIGMA TAPE MAGAZINE - IMAGINE A PET MAG MAZE!  
TIME TRAVELLER - MA TELL RIVETER!  
THE TALISMAN OF POWER - WAN SMILE OF HOPE TART!  
LABOURS OF HERCULES - BEER AS FLUSH COLOUR!  
HOUND OF SHADOW - SAD WOUND OF HOD!  
ISLAND OF CHAOS - I FAN SAD SCHOOL!  
THE JADE STONE - HE TESTED JOAM!

DEAD END - NEED DAD!  
DOUBLE AGENT - TO BUDGE LANE!  
DRAGON'S BREATH - ON HER BAD ANGST!  
ESSEX - SEXES!  
FUTURE WARS - FUSE RAW RUT!  
THE GRIMOIRE - I GOT HER RIME!  
THE HOLY GRAIL - HAIRY LEG HOLT!  
MIDWINTER - WRITE MIND!  
MINDWHEEL - WELD IN HEN!  
THE LOST CITY - THEY LIT SCOT!

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## DID YOU KNOW?

That an Archimedes computer is a RISC?

Because it is a Reduced Instruction Set Computer!

That our brave soldiers in the Gulf are making good use of their FACE?

Field Artillery Computing Equipment ensures missiles reach their targets!

That some computer networks use a TAP?

Ring and bus networks often use a Token Access Protocol whereby an electronic token is passed round from computer to computer. When a token reaches a computer that is ready to transmit data it is held there until the transmission is completed before resuming its circulation.

# HINTS AND TIPS



## THE TALISMAN OF POWER by JAY HONOSUTOMO played on Amstrad CPC

To pass door - EXAMINE PLAQUE, LEVER PLAQUE, EXAMINE SCROLL, READ SCROLL, GET SCROLL, DROP CROWBAR, NW, S, S, S, D, E, EXAMINE CREATURES, TALK TO DWARVES, N, N, N, D, EXAMINE DOOR, READ SCROLL, SAY\*ERO VICTUM\*.

## CHAOS STRIKES BACK by JOHN R BARNESLEY played on Atari ST

The dungeon consists of TEN levels that can be mapped on a grid 46 squares East to West and 47 squares North to South, although no level requires the entire grid. With the bottom level marked as LEVEL 1, the starting square is on LEVEL 6, 20N 29E, and the JUNCTION OF THE WAYS is on LEVEL 3, 29N 23E. Accurate 3-D mapping is crucial. Use pits and stairs for correct relative positioning of different levels. Many rooms can only be reached by falling or climbing through a pit from the level above. Wherever possible, map the pit system from below; this often reveals hidden traps on the level above before you descend! Many walls are permeable, so if progress seems impossible, try walking through the walls. One such wall is in the starting room, concealing a room which contains useful armour.

The four different routes from the Junction meet at the entrance to the Diabolical Demon Director on Level 7. Beyond this they part again, with one Corbum to be found on each way to the final encounter on Level 10. Be well advised to complete all four pre-DDD routes BEFORE attempting to pass this point.

## MEAN STREETS by JOHN R BARNESLEY played on Atari ST

To keep all your money, save the game, buy information and then load the game!  
In gunfights, MOVE, DUCK, SHOOT FROM CROUCH, RISE when safe, MOVE... and so on.

Bribe SONNY FLETCHER and SMILEY MONROE.

Threaten TOM GRIFFITH and RON MEAT.

For a price, Arnold Dweeb 4610 (you find out his name from Larry Hammond 4935) will give you a long list of people who work for Gideon Enterprises and MTC.

Peter Dull 4674 knows where to find Bosworth Clark.

## THE LOST TEMPLE by ALF BALDWIN played on Spectrum

Ask the teller in the Post Office to send a telex to your company for some money.

When you land in the jungle, apply the mosquito repellent lotion before venturing further.

Move the boulder to see what's underneath.

Give the dead lizard to the snake.

Cut a creeper and tie it to the tree at the top of the chasm so you can climb down.

The ledge below the cliff top is on the point of collapsing so don't bother with the Inca coin.

Just get the paddle and the banana and get back up before it gives way.

Examine the pool to find some rocks. Throw the rocks into the stream to form stepping stones.

The rocks are very heavy and you will need to drop everything in order to carry them.

When you have crossed the stream, dig the bank to find a flint.

WHATS EYORES by BARBARA BASSINGTHWAIGHTE played on BBC

In cottage the soldier wants his musket, fife and drum. Give him Rat for Musket, Give him Bananas for Fife, Give him Water Otter for drum and he rewards you.

In Forest of Mathematics, drop Adder.

When the Giant chases you, drop banana skin.

Get Hammer from Ham Sandwich.

WIZARD OF AKYRZ by BARBARA BASSINGTHWAIGHTE played on BBC

The cave of the repulsive goblin - kill him with Elfin Sword.

Dig in Smelly Cave for Sceptre.

Drop Fox by Vixen then follow Fox to the cave.

ESCAPE FROM HODGKINS MANOR by JIM STRUTHERS played on Spectrum

At the start, go W, EXAM GRIFFITI, then WAIT.

Lift the mat on the porch at the Manor.

Wash your hands in the basin.

Get the Croissant and give it to the French Chauffeur.

Examine the Lectern.

Give the bible to the Vicar.

Examine the robes.

Strike the shield on the wall with the axe.

In the car, open the glove compartment.

PYRAMID OF DOOM by GEORGE KERSEY played on Spectrum

Saw the leg off the table.

Wear the Iron Glove to protect yourself against the poison needle.

There is another room past the Mirror Room.

Examine the Skull.

BARDS TALE I by MAREE WALSH played on Commodore 64

Use the design of the game to your advantage. Besides a back-up disk, keep a work disk handy (another disk with your characters on it). If you have a weapon or armour e.g. El Cid's fire horn that you'd like to duplicate, trade it to another character then remove this character. Swap to your work disk and remove El Cid. Swap disks and remove El Cid. Swap disks again and add El Cid. Now both El Cid and another character have a fire horn! It's important that the disk is accessed after the second swap before getting El Cid's data. You can force this by checking the roster first.

THE BEHEADED SMUGGLER by JOAN WILLIAMS played on Spectrum

PART ONE:

Push flowerpot in garden.

Smother kitchen fire with blanket.

Lift lid of piano.

Tap panel in Library, push panel.

The bullet is in the cane.

PART TWO:

Stand on box to open window.  
Hail Cab.  
Knock on Moran's door and give card.  
Shoot padlock at Albert Docks.  
Give pipe to man.

LORDS OF TIME A GOLDEN OLDIE by RON RAINBIRD played on Atari 800XL

To visit the various Time Zones, wind clock to enter, swing pendulum and turn the cog bearing the zone number you wish to arrive at.

Wear the rucksack to carry more items.  
Wave Valerian at the tree.  
The planks will make a bridge.  
Narcissus is vain.  
The Lodestone attracts the Keys.  
Do a "George Washington" to the tree.  
Examine the compost heap more than once.

PYRAMID by MARGO PORTEOUS played on Spectrum

When at the Pyramid, EXAM SLAB, INSERT ROD. Then you can go NORTH into the Pyramid, first making sure you have everything from outside. You may have to make another journey to the tent for everything.

THE JADE NECKLACE by JACKIE HOLT played on Spectrum

When you've found the body, examine and search it.  
Examine the photo, hair and wig.  
If you've been mugged, search the bodyguard after you've shot him.  
The Sergeant will give you a reference if you ask him.  
You need a jenny to enter the Sanitorium.

CLOUD 99 by SHARON HARWOOD played on Spectrum

Give the film to the tourist.  
Rub gold dust on choker.  
Unscrew pen and give springs to Father Time.  
Spray Jack Frost with de-icer to retrieve stolen items.  
Pour water down the grate to get the token.

THE JADE STONE by SHARON HARWOOD played on Spectrum

Sit on chair in your bedroom to find something useful.  
Sell cakes to the Baker.  
Tear petticoat to make bandages.  
Don't kiss Carrion!  
Play with the children in the wood.

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# OBJECTS AND THEIR USES

## STALKER

Objects and uses - by Alf Baldwin.

BLASTER	Can be used only once after which power is exhausted. Use it to kill bear.
BARREL	Full of fuel.
SHARD	Very sharp, makes a good knife.
PARACHUTE MATERIAL	Dip it in fuel and tie it to branch to make a torch.
FLINT	Strike it on boulder in Crawler's cave to light torch.
ELECTRONIC DEVICE	Dig when it bleeps.
FRUIT	Give it to native girl to restore her strength.
VIDEO DISC	Contains evidence of Holden's innocence.
BEAR	Kill it with blaster and skin it with shard.
BEARSKIN	Use it to mend hole in coracle.
OARS	Needed to row boat to islet and club furry creature to death.
SMALL BOOK	Contains signal code numbers.
COMMUNICATIONS UNIT	Type distress code for rescue.
CARCASSES	Examine to find skull.
SKULL	Open to find ruby.
RUBY	Insert it in orifice in gate to dome.
MONEY	Examine clothing in changing room to find it. Use it to buy two bottles of beer for Bey.
LEVER	In Anti-Grav chamber. Pull it to get Bey to throw object on ledge at you.
GOOGLES	Wear them when you take a swim at the spa to see object at the bottom of the pool.
MACHINE	At launch pad, insert Captain Aldraan's Entri-Kard to board shuttle.
PIECE OF PAPER	Examine bunks in shuttle's sleeping chamber to find it. Has code number on it.
BASEBALL BAT	Hit Controller with it.
SPACESUIT	Wear it before turning off shuttle's oxygen supply.
CAPTAIN ALDRAAN	Examine him to find stolen video disc and white powder proving his guilt in narcotics scandal.

All other objects - Bamboo Frame, Hollow Reed, Towel, Chinese Cookbook, Spanner, Bucket, Straightjacket, Security Pass and vending machine in Sports Store are red herrings.

# GETTING YOU STARTED

THE CASE OF THE MIXED-UP SHYMER by VINCE BARKER played on C64  
W, W, EXAM MATTRESS, REMOVE SPRINGS, E, EXAM HUMPTY, W, E, D, D, E, S, EXAM ROCKS, TAKE CASE, OPEN CASE, LOOK, TAKE NIGHTIE, TAKE TOOTHBRUSH, DROP CASE, N, W, UP, DROP SPRINGS, OP, N, W, EXAM HAY, TAKE TIN, E, S, E, S, E, S, PAINT BAA BAA WHITE SHEEP BLACK, DROP TIN, DROP TOOTHBRUSH, N, W, N, E, E, E, EXAM DISPLAY, TAKE SEEDS, W, SE, EXAM COUNTER, TAKE PIE, NW, W, NE, GIVE PIE TO JACK, TAKE SCISSORS, SW, W, N, CUT STRING, DROP SCISSORS, S, W, N, N, GIVE POCKET TO KITTY, TAKE KEY. Now go and find Tom and give him the key.....

HOUSE ON THE TOR by SHARON HARWOOD played on Spectrum  
EXAM BED, OPEN DRAWER, TAKE WALLET, OPEN WALLET, I, EXAM WINDOW, EXAM PAINTING, READ SIGNATURE, E, E, S, EXAM DESK, TAKE TWINE, READ NOVEL, SIT, EXAM CHAIR, TAKE BOOK, READ BOOK, U, N, OPEN DOOR, E, EXAM WEEDS, TAKE BOOTS, EXAM TREE, UP, TAKE KITE, D, W, W, (by this time the postman should have been, if not you'll have to wait), TAKE ENVELOPE, EXAM ENVELOPE, OPEN ENVELOPE, READ LETTER, OPEN DOOR, N, E, E, D, WEAR BOOTS, N, TAKE MOSS, IN, EXAM NEST, TAKE EGG, EXAM EGG, U, U, E, BUY TICKET, UPCOMBE, PAY, E.....

THE LEGACY by JOAN WILLIAMS played on Spectrum  
SEARCH TAXI, TAKE CARD, PAY DRIVER, OUT, S, TAKE BRICK, N, E, BREAK WINDOW, EXAM SHACK, TAKE SPADE, W, S, INSERT CARD, S, S, IN, N, EXAM DESK.....

BEHOLD ATLANTIS by WALLY JEFFRIES played on Spectrum  
EXAM JEANS, EXAM SHIRT, N, EXAM WARDROBE, OPEN SUITCASE, GET BATHER, GET MATCHES, REMOVE JEANS, WEAR BATHER, EXAMINE SUITCASE, GET GOGGLES, S, E, WAIT, RIDE MULE, as you climb off the Greek mutters something like "Zeus", DROP DRACHMAS, GET SPADE, DROP MATCHES, SWIM, WEAR GOGGLES, DIVE, SWITCH ON TORCH, W, E, DIG BED, GET STONE, EXAM STONE, STROP KNIFE, CUT KELP, W.....

THE MURAL by MARK ELTRINGHAM played on Amstrad  
N, N, GET COAT, EXAMINE COAT, GET SCISSORS, S, EXAMINE BOOKS (do this four times), STAND ON PLATE, UP, W, N, READ NEWSPAPER, COUPON OUT, DROP SCISSORS, GET COUPON, N, GET PAPER, OUT, W, N, N, E, E, POST COUPON, LOOK, GET WATCH, W, W, W, DOWN, STAND ON PLATE, W, N, GET MOTHBALLS, S, GIVE WATCH TO PENGUIN, S, DOWN, DROP MOTHBALLS, GET GLUE, GLUE PAPER (the Gnome now takes the bucket - follow him to Giant Cave), ASK THE GNOME, (it is a boat), IN BUCKET.....

STARSHIP QUEST by SHARON HARWOOD played on Spectrum  
AFT, PO, AFT, ST, SAY "GOODBYE", PO, AFT, SEARCH BAY, TAKE CHARGER, AFT, ST, SEARCH RACKS, SHELVES, CUPBOARD, TAKE FORCER, GRAPNEL, FLASH, PO, FO, FO, FO, PO, FO, UP, FO, SIT, PRESS DOOR, FASTEN HARNESS, PRESS AUTOMATIC.....

THERMONUCLEAR WARGAMES by VINCE BARKER played on C64  
S, S, GO GARAGE, OPEN TOOLBOX, LOOK TOOLBOX, GET SCREWDRIIVER, LOOK TOOLBOX, GET SPANNER, GET CABLE, LOOK RACKS, GET PIPES, LOOK PIPES (end in ground), JOIN PIPES, I, (now have long pole),



W, S, ENTER FOREST, E, E, E, JUMP FENCE (using pole), LOOK DUCT, REMOVE GRILL, TIE CABLE, TREE, CLIMB CABLE, GET BAR, CLIMB CABLE, E, BREAK LOCK, OPEN DOOR, GO DOOR, LOOK MACHINERY, LOOK MACHINERY, TURN WHEEL, LOOK BIN, UNDO NUT, LOOK BIN, GET TORCH, DROP BAR, DROP SPANNER, W, W, CLIMB CABLE, ON TORCH, LOOK HOLE, CLIMB RUNGS, D, REMOVE GRILL, ENTER HOLE, GO DOOR, you are caught and taken to sick bay.....

WISHBRINGER by JOHN R BARNSELY played on Atari ST

ENTER OFFICE, WAIT, GET ENVELOPE, LEAVE OFFICE, W, W, YES, N, WAIT, WAIT, WAIT, ENTER GRAVE, GET BONE, UP, S, E, E, E, GIVE BONE TO POODLE, N, WAIT, GET NOTE, N, LOOK IN FOUNTAIN, GET COIN, N, N, N, N, E, UP, W, N, UP, E, S, UP, OPEN DOOR, ENTER DOOR, WAIT, WAIT, GIVE ENVELOPE, OPEN ENVELOPE, READ LETTER, WAIT, GET CAN, WAIT, LEAVE SHOP, DOWN, N, W, DOWN, S, E, DOWN (cliff bottom), W, OPEN CAN, GET CAN, SQUEEZE CAN, GET STONE, OPEN GATE, S, S, S, WAIT, WAIT, WAIT (until the guards capture you and you are thrown into prison), GET BLANKET, MOVE BUNK, GET ALL, DOWN, N, E, COVER GRUE WITH BLANKET, OPEN FRIDGE, GET EARTHWORM, W, W, OPEN, UP, GET HORSESHOE, (now watch out that the guards don't get you again), N, E, N, N, E, BREAK A BRANCH, GET BRANCH, W, S, S, S, S, W, W, PUT THE BRANCH INTO THE PIT, GET BRANCH, DIG IN THE X WITH THE BRANCH, DROP BRANCH, GET WHISTLE, BLOW WHISTLE, W, WAIT, GET HAT, WAIT, BLOW WHISTLE, N, E, E, E, GIVE HAT TO THE PELICAN, .....

ECLIPSE by JOAN WILLIAMS played on Spectrum

EXAM ID, WEAR ID, N, E, TAKE WOOD, CHARGE UNIT, WEAR UNIT, W, W, S, W, PRESS IN, PRESS M3, PRESS OUT, W, STAND SCALE, SEARCH GYM, PRESS BUTTON, JAM CLOSET, S, TAKE CROWBAR.....

LOST TEMPLE by JOAN WILLIAMS played on Spectrum

S, E, TALK TO TELLER, SEND TELEX, PAY TELLER, W, N, N, TALK TO PHARMACIST, BUY TIN, APPLY LOTION, S, E, BUY FOOD, BUY SPADE, BUY KNIFE, W, W, PAY PILOT.....

MYSTERY OF THE LOST SHEEP by VINCE BARKER played on C64

PART ONE: EAT BRAMBLES, EAT BRAMBLES, I, MAKE SPADE, DIG, EXAM MOLEHILL, TAKE COIN, DIG, CLIMB MOUNTAIN, N, E, S, TAKE GLASS, N, W, N, WAVE GLASS, FOCUS SUN, ON LOCK, DROP GLASS, DROP SPADE, S, NW, N, N, N, EXAM TRAMP, TELL MEANING OF LIFE, LOOK, TAKE LIGHTER, TAKE CHALK, S, S, S, E, S, NE, NE, TAKE CROWBAR, NW, S, S, W, N, ASK BOUNCY BOB TO MOVE, LOOK, TAKE GUN, N, N, EXAMINE BUS, SMASH DOOR, S, S, S, S, NE, NE, NW, THROW CROWBAR, S, S, W, TAKE SPADE, N, N, N, BOARD BUS, START BUS, ME, HIT ACCELERATOR, GIVE LIGHTER.....

PART TWO: EXAM RUCKSACK, N, PULL PILOT AWAY FROM CONTROLS, FLY PLANE, OPEN DOOR, PULL CORD, DROP CAN, SLEEP, SE, S, CLIMB DRAINPIPE, TAKE MIRROR, LISTEN (hear whereabouts of key), W, TAKE SHEET, TAKE COATHANGER, N, PULL FLOORBOARDS, TAKE WIRES, E, TAKE KEY, UNLOCK DOOR, N, DROP KEY, DROP COATHANGER, TAKE HOSEPIPE, TAKE LADDER, S, S, CLIMB DRAINPIPE, W, DROP LADDER, CLIMB LADDER, OPEN SUITCASE, LOOK, TAKE TAPE, CLIMB LADDER, N, E, S, S, GIVE MIRROR TO TROLL, OPEN GATE, S, MAKE BALLOON.....

\*\*\* CONTRIBUTIONS ARE URGENTLY NEEDED FOR THIS SECTION PLEASE \*\*\*

# SERIALISED SOLUTIONS

## WHISTLE by TONY MELVILLE played on Spectrum

### PART TWO

E, (a beggar stops you), GIVE CORN, E, EXAM TREE (you see a rope), CLIMB TREE, CUT ROPE, DOWN, DROP KNIFE, GET ROPE, E, UP (by a stone altar, remember the painting), PRAY, REMOVE MASK, DROP MASK, GET PHIAL, DOWN, W, W, W, W (the Alchemist gives you a plant and takes the phial), EXAM PLANT (it's a tendum plant), E, N, N, E, E, E, E, E, E, S, E (back at the tree stump), TIE ROPE, GET TOFFEE and PLIERS, DOWN, S, EXAM CRACK, PULL LEVER, N, W (by a cave), IN, EXAM TIGER (it's hungry), GIVE TOFFEE (it's got toothache), PULL TOOTH, GET TOOTH, DROP PLIERS, OUT, E, UP, W, N, W, W, W, W, W, W, N, UP (by a large rock), SMASH SPHERE, GET ORE, EXAM ORE (sinium), DOWN, S, E, E, E, E, IN (spaceship).....ADVENTURE COMPLETED!

## QUEST FOR THE GOLDEN EGGCUP by TONY MELVILLE played on Spectrum

### PART TWO

TALK WONGO, GIVE BOTTLE TO WONGO, EXAM WAND, W, N, N, E, E, S, UP, READ GRAFFITI, IN, DROP OBJECT, DROP TABLET, REMOVE SLIPPERS, DROP SLIPPERS, the floor starts to break now, REMOVE TURBAN, DROP TURBAN, REMOVE JEANS, DROP JEANS, DROP GOLDEN EGG, UP, DOWN, N, W, W, S, S, E, GET CAGE, EXAM CAGE, W, S, S, RING BELL, CLIMB ON RAFT, SHOW CARD TO MAN, S, SIT, S, GET BIRD, if bird not here you must travel the passages till you find it, W, E, W, E, GET BAG, you find it stuck to the floor, EXAM BAG, LOOK IN BAG, GET KEY, EXAM KEY, W, S, N, N, SIT, GET CAN, N, RING BELL, CLIMB ON RAFT, N, N, N, N, E, E, S, UP, IN, DROP CAN, GET GOLDEN EGG, UP, DOWN, N, E, WAVE WAND, E, UP, UNLOCK GATE, UP, E, UP, EXAM GUARD, FREE BIRD, E, READ POSTER, READ SIGN, DROP GOLDEN EGG, GET POSTER, W, DOWN, W, DOWN, W, WAVE WAND, W, S, UP, IN, DROP KEY, DROP POSTER, DROP CAGE, UP, DOWN, N, GET COAL, EXAM COAL, W, N, GET SWORD, EXAM SWORD, S, W, S, S, E, GET PACKET, EXAM PACKET, W, N, N, E, E, S, UP, IN, DROP COAL, DROP PACKET, DROP SWORD, UP, DOWN, S, W, EXAM GRAVE, W, EXAM MACHINE, EXAM ALTAR, GET VIAL, EXAM VIAL, ASK you get a funny response, E, E, S, GET STICK, EXAM STICK, S, READ SIGN, S, UP, EXAM PICTURE, UP, READ SIGN, E, EXAM KID, W, W, GET SILVER, EXAM HARVEY, EXAM COMPUTER, if you input "get computer" an alarm bell starts ringing and you cannot get anything, E, DOWN, DOWN, N, N, N, N, UP, IN, DROP STICK, DROP VIAL, the floor breaks and an angry mole gives you the bronze egg if you will leave, INVENTORY, DOWN, N, E, WAVE WAND, E, UP, E, UP, E, DROP SILVER EGG, DROP BRONZE EGG, GET EGGCUP, EXAM EGGCUP, W, DOWN, W, DOWN, W, WAVE WAND, W, W, W, S, S, S, S, RING BELL, CLIMB ON RAFT, SHOW CARD TO MAN, S, SIT, S, W, N, S, UP, S, S, W, U, U, U, move about until God appears, GIVE EGGCUP TO GOD.....ADVENTURE COMPLETED

## MAFIA CONTRACT I by JIM STRUTHERS played on Spectrum

### PART TWO

CUT BLUE, S, START CAR, E, S, W, W, DROPKEYS, BUY PAPER, GET PAPER, GET CHANGE, DOWN, INSERT COINS, GET TICKET, S, S, N, N, Y, UP, S, E, GIVE PAPER, DRINK MATHS, W, S, W, SHOOT BODYGUARD, W, W, S, OPEN BOX, GET CROWBAR, N, OPEN CRATES, GET LAUNCHER, W, HIT WORKER, W, UP, N, FIRE LAUNCHER, N, KILL VINCETTI.....ADVENTURE COMPLETED

Notes: To escape burning building, S, W, W, REMOVE VEST, DROP VEST, JUMP This gives your 100%



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PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU ONLY  
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